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# *Land policy* REVIEW

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## Government Reorganization in the Ozarks

by FRED A. CLARENBACH

THE INCREASING complexity of modern life has broadened the range of essential governmental activities. There are extensive programs for the positive promotion of business and agriculture; billions are spent by American governments for relief and welfare activities in behalf of their citizens. These more recently developed functions are financed and administered or controlled largely by the Federal Government, for the problems require attack upon a national scale and the means of financing such activities are, in practice, available only to the Federal Government.

In other words, both the inherent nature of the problems and the fiscal limitations of State and local governments have influenced irresistibly the assignment to the Federal level of primary responsibility for the policies and finances of the more important new or broadened governmental activities. That there are dangers accompanying such centralization no one would gainsay, but the requirements of action have made such a trend almost inevitable.

## *Missouri's Movement Toward Centralization*

A movement in many respects similar in origin to the tendency toward Federal centralization is the one toward centralization within States. Unmistakable steps in that direction have been taken in Missouri.

Before the enactment of the Centennial Road Law in 1921, the role of the State in highway building and maintenance was limited to furnishing advice and State financial aid, the initiative in road matters remaining with local officials. Since 1921, however, the State has constructed and maintained a system of major and supplementary roads. An increasing mileage of county roads is being incorporated into the State supplementary, or farm-to-market system.

The 1931 Missouri school law is another example. In this instance, the State makes heavy financial contributions without adequate control over expenditures or policies. It is probably safe to say that the establishment of effective State safeguards to insure the efficient use of State monies is only a question of time.

Also in 1931 there was established the State Highway Patrol, which has become an important police agency. A large part of the crime-control functions earlier in the hands of local officers only is now performed more efficiently by State patrolmen.

Since 1933, State laws have extended State control over fiscal affairs of counties. These units are now required to make and file annual budgets with the State auditor. Some progress has also been made, under State guidance, toward uniformity and adequacy of county records, accounts, and financial statements, but a great deal remains to be done.

Recent legislation has given the State authority over, and large financial responsibility for, public-welfare activities formerly treated as purely local functions. Two important examples are the old-age assistance program and the transfer from the counties to the State of two-thirds of the cost for the indigent insane persons in State hospitals.

## *Considerations Influencing Future Policies*

Certain conclusions may be drawn from a consideration of this creeping movement toward State centralization in Missouri. It has been recognized that many formerly local functions are no longer merely local in their significance, but have a State-wide or Nation-wide significance. Furthermore, there is growing acceptance of the need for expert, professional administration that often is beyond the competence of local officials. And, finally, an increasing degree of centralization has been forced by the hard fact that the fiscal resources of local units are not adequate to finance many of the expanding activities formerly allocated to the local government. The sole important source of county revenue is the property tax, and no promising new source of local revenue has appeared.

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The need for adjustments in local government is particularly clear in the Ozark region of Missouri. In some of the Ozark counties at present, and prospectively in a larger number, the available fiscal resources are insufficient to support essential local government functions, or the present structure and many of the administrative areas and procedures in local government are poorly adapted for efficient performance of the functions allotted to local units. Finally, the application of full-rate property taxes to lands adapted to forestry, coupled with inefficient and inequitable tax administration, has been one of the factors restraining the development of forestry on private lands. And it is generally agreed that forest restoration, on a much larger scale than that which may reasonably be expected under public programs, is basic to establishing a healthy Ozark economy.

Recognizing this situation, some persons have advocated the transfer of more and more financial and administrative responsibility from the counties to the State. Others have proposed county consolidation, or reorganization and simplification within existing counties, or functional cooperation among existing counties, or various combinations of these and other plans. However, little thought has been directed toward an understanding of the implications and comparative merits of the various proposals as they would apply in Missouri.

### *Efficiency and Economy*

Considerations that should influence an intelligent choice of direction for the evolution of the administration of governmental functions within the State may be considered from viewpoints of efficiency, economy, and popular control of government.

The forms through which local self-government operates, the services to which it applies, and the safeguards against the dangers of centralization—all these may be quite different in our complex modern society from what they were in a simpler era, without destroying democracy.

The first practical questions to be answered are: What functions now in the hands of local officials may fairly be regarded as functions in which the State has predominant interest? What functions are beyond the fiscal and administrative competence of local units to perform adequately? The ideal is the allocation to the State of all functions having a predominantly State-wide incidence. The *order and degree* of transfer of these functions will depend upon relative urgencies, and also upon progress in the "engineering of human consent."

Inasmuch as the need for adjustment is most acute in the poorer Ozark counties, a reasonable first step would appear to be the provision of a single optional alternative plan of local governmental organization designed to fit the conditions of these areas. Such a plan should include, in addition to reallocation of functions, an internal reorganization of the

improvements could be made. A very simple (but perhaps not wholly desirable) way of relieving overstrained county finances would be for the State to assume the costs of election administration now borne by the counties. In this event, satisfactory safeguards would have to be set up to assure efficient use of State funds.

The assessment of property for taxation is poorly done in Missouri counties, urban and rural. It is futile to expect that elected local assessors with few or no technical qualifications should be able to make accurate assessments of the varied types of real and personal property in the tax base. Maintenance and use of various aids to assessments, such as tax and soil maps, sales records, and the like, are either beyond the desire or the competence of many local assessors.

As an intermediate step toward State assessment, strong State supervision of local assessors is a logical move. But too much should not be expected from a system in which appointed State employees are given the task of supervising elected local officials. An important State interest in local tax administration (inadequately recognized in practice) exists because of the present method of distributing State aid for education to local districts.

Because desirable land-use adjustments are being retarded by inequitable assessment, the State has further reason to increase its control over tax administration. A tax reversion law should be looked upon as of primary importance in meeting the requirements of a good tax administration device and an almost indispensable land-use adjustment device, particularly in the Ozark region.

### ***Justice***

Regarding the administration of justice, various adjustments seem desirable.

Assuming that the circuit court system is to remain substantially as it is at present, something can be said for the abolition of the prosecuting attorney's office and the cooperation of the counties in the judicial circuit in employing a circuit attorney. If the State attorney general's office could be strengthened, there would be much to be said for lodging the county prosecutor's functions in the hands of the attorney general and his assistants.

There appears to be greater need in most counties for a court between the justice of the peace courts and the circuit court, than for the justice court, an outmoded institution. Inasmuch as the probate court in many counties has little business, it might be desirable to reconstitute this court, lodge with it the duties of a trial court, and abolish the justice of the peace and constable systems.

### ***Administrative Reorganization Within the County***

What would be left after such a reorganization?

The county court, county clerk, collector, treasurer, circuit clerk, recorder, surveyor, coroner, and sheriff are the elective officers not yet discussed.

An opinion frequently expressed is that the business of the typical Missouri county could be much more economically and efficiently handled by the county clerk and several deputy clerks than by the present complement of elective officials. There appears to be considerable warrant for such an opinion.

An internal reorganization might assume the following lines: Retention of the county court without salary, per diem, or mileage, and perhaps with a different designation; abolition of all other purely county officers; the appointment of a county business manager (by the county court) to be responsible for the preparation of a budget, adequate financial records, and reporting, and for the appointment and supervision of the staff necessary to perform the duties now allocated to the collector, treasurer, recorder, surveyor, and highway engineer, those duties of the sheriff not connected with the circuit court, and miscellaneous tasks connected with minor functions; the circuit clerk to be appointed by, and responsible to, the circuit court, with the clerk or his deputy performing the court duties of the present sheriff.

The crime-control function, including the duties of the present coroner, are assumed to be allocated to the State level. In those cases where inter-county cooperation is desirable, the county court should make the necessary agreements with the aid of the business manager.

### ***Overhead Organization***

Two alternative plans for overhead organization may be indicated.

(1) The elected county court to appoint three chief administrative officers: A fiscal officer responsible for budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting, and the collection, custody, and disbursement of funds; a chief clerk responsible for the duties of the present recorder and miscellaneous and new county functions; and a county highway engineer.

(2) The county court to become a county commission of three elected members, each a full-time, salaried man, and each responsible for one of the three sets of duties indicated above. In connection with either the original suggestion or the first alternative, it should be provided by law that neither the county court nor its individual members may deal directly with subordinate employees, but only with the chief administrative officials.

The size of counties could be adjusted either by combination or division in order to harmonize area, population, and resources with the requirements of the new functions. Possibly some forested areas would have no organized local government, necessary local functions being administered by the State.

## *A State Department of Local Government*

To give greater responsibilities to the State without providing adequately within the State government for discharging those responsibilities would probably result in little improvement.

A State Department of Local Government appears to be the appropriate type of agency both for administering the formerly local functions and for aiding and supervising the local governmental units.

Among the logical functions of such a department would be: The prescription of forms for the financial and other records of local units; control over the creation of debt, and supervision of the marketing of bonds; making available the services of a central purchasing agency for local units; control of subdivision and of the creation of special districts; and the continuous or annual auditing of the affairs of every local unit.

The contemplated centralization within the county would make the auditing function of the State department one of great importance.

## *Possible Results of Reorganization*

What would be the effects upon governmental costs and upon popular control of government of an evolutionary reorganization along the lines just indicated?

Experience alone can furnish a satisfactory answer.

An administrative organization geared to present-day requirements within the State may seem inimical to local self-government because of the centralization. On the other hand, it is quite apparent that no real local self-government is possible in connection with the major functions now administered by State-county cooperation; the county inevitably becomes the weaker and the State the dominant partner.

There is much truth in the view that neither an individual nor a governmental unit can long maintain its independence when it cannot pay its own way. The typical Ozark county cannot pay its own way so long as it is burdened with functions that today belong to the State.

Democracy can and does function at the State and national levels, often more effectively than at local levels. Furthermore, it should be recognized that probably the most promising way to prevent an undesirable centralization of power in the Federal Government is for the individual States to establish within their separate borders strong administrative organizations capable of meeting adequately the contemporary demands upon Government.

## *True Self-Government*

Unburdened of State functions, most counties would have the resources and the possibilities for becoming truly self-governing units, in matters of primarily local concern. Local activities, now conducted rarely or not

at all, could be established or expanded. Libraries, parks, playgrounds, recreation centers and community auditoriums are needed in the average rural county.

A thorough overhauling of the manner in which records of property ownership are kept would be an eminently worthy undertaking; it would greatly facilitate programs of land-use adjustment in the Ozarks, where title difficulties impede steps to bring land into public forestry programs.

The rejuvenated rural county might well discover one of its most fruitful lines of action in cooperation in land-use planning, and particularly in promoting the execution of such plans. Rural zoning, for example, might prove to be a desirable instrument for the county in promoting socially desirable uses of land.

After rendering unto the State the things that are the State's, local democracies can then proceed toward developing a real and effective self-government with respect to fundamentally important local interests, many of which are now utterly neglected. As a citizen of the State, every local resident entitled to vote may express his will with respect to the conduct of State affairs.

Democracy will have moved in the direction of that increased efficiency that is necessary to its own preservation.

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## In Later Issues

**S**HEEP Migrate, Too, is the title of an interesting article that tells what happens when 6,500,000 sheep move to and from Federal range lands in the high lands between the Rockies and the Sierra Nevadas. It is by H. R. Hochmuth and Earl R. Franklin of the Division of Farm Management and Costs, Far Western area.

H. E. Selby, area leader of the Division of Land Economics in the Pacific Region, examines the need and purpose of land reclamation, and concludes that "Probably a valid argument for land reclamation is to provide new land to which farmers on submarginal land can move in order to facilitate retirement of such land from crop production."

# The Cotton-Poor South

by B. H. THIBODEAUX

CASUAL readers of newspapers and magazines ordinarily have little love and little time for statistics. But cartoons showing King Cotton in attitudes of acute suffering have been so numerous that it is now generally impressed on the public consciousness that the country has on its hands a "cotton problem," whose general outlines are common knowledge in the cotton country and are not foreign to the general reader elsewhere who peruses the editorial matter accompanying the drawings.

The immediate situation that has attracted wide attention involves decreased income from the total cotton crop, an accumulation of unsold surpluses, reduced exports, and keener competition between American and foreign cotton in foreign markets.

This condition is of national concern because its implications extend beyond the limits of the Cotton Belt.

During the 9 crop years beginning with 1930, the average annual cash income from cotton lint and seed, excluding Government payments, was 674 million dollars less than during the decade beginning with the 1920 crop year. Moreover, during the recent period, prices of items purchased by farmers were not reduced so much, proportionately, as were receipts from cotton lint and seed. This decline in money income and in purchasing power, large even in this era of multimillion figures, is a factor contributing to industrial unemployment and on lowered prices of farm products normally purchased by cotton farmers from other groups.

In the South itself the maladjustment has lowered farm living standards, already adjudged generally inadequate. To cotton farmers, as to other groups, there is a limit in time and amount to the extent to which credit can be stretched to cover periods of low income.

## *Remedies Must Go Back to the Farm*

However serious this immediate circumstance, it is only part of the whole problem. If the cotton surplus were to disappear by magic and cotton prices were to reach parity with a volume of sales per producer such as prevailed before the production-control programs, a great benefit would result. But even if this were achieved, the nature of cotton production now extant in much of the South would continue to yield low returns per producer-family, with levels of living reflecting the low returns. The problem is of long standing.



Permanent remedial measures can be effected only as it is possible to reach back to the farm itself and there to change the condition, present since the development of cotton production in the South, of a small volume of products per worker in the older parts of the Cotton Belt. A general examination of certain phases of the production and income situation in the eight principal Eastern cotton-producing States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas—which we shall call the eastern Cotton Belt—will illustrate the point.

### *Gross Income per Person Averages \$162*

In these States, in which approximately 57 percent of the total United States cotton crop originates, the agricultural pattern is largely dominated by the cotton enterprise. There cotton accounted for roughly 52 percent of the cash income from all livestock and all crops, including cotton, during the 14-year period 1924-37, and in 1934 was grown on 69 percent of the farms.

Between 1924 and 1937, the average gross farm income per capita of farm population in the eastern Cotton Belt amounted to \$162, less than one-half of the \$381 obtained per farm person in the rest of the United States, and only 34 percent of the \$483 received by a farm worker in Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana. These figures include receipts from sales, the value of farm products consumed at home, and Government farm-benefit payments. Since the eastern Cotton Belt is largely agricultural, it is easily understood why the ability to support roads, schools, and other social institutions is less than elsewhere in the United States.

### *The Why of a "Cotton Economy"*

This quick look at the agricultural picture in the eastern Cotton Belt suggests a strong relationship between cotton production and low farm incomes. And here lies the difficulty. The South is poor with cotton, but probably would be poorer without it.

An explanation of the predominance of the product in southeastern agriculture lies primarily in the relatively high returns per acre and per hour of labor in cotton, compared to returns from other enterprises generally adapted to the region.

With labor plentiful and available at low wages, so that land can be used intensively, agricultural land values in cotton-producing areas have tended to be based upon actual or potential returns from farming systems that revolve about cotton production, and real-estate taxes have been adjusted to provide public services for the dense cotton-farming

population. Once these conditions are established, they tend in turn to perpetuate the cotton system on improved agricultural land, particularly if mortgages are outstanding against it.

But that, of course, does not explain why earnings per worker or per family should be so low in the cotton country. For that explanation it is necessary to look at the production basis itself.

At the prices that have prevailed, low incomes in the eastern Cotton Belt result primarily from the small acreage in crop land and the small volume of crop and livestock products per worker. Between 1924 and 1937, the average acreage in the principal harvested crops per capita of farm population in the eastern Cotton Belt amounted to 5.3 acres, of which 2 acres were in corn and 1.8 in cotton.

Livestock production was even less important, relatively, accounting for only 16 percent of the cash farm income in the eastern Cotton Belt in 1934, and was generally insufficient for home needs.

### *Population Pressure and Production per Worker*

The small volume of production per farm person in the eastern Cotton Belt can be attributed partly to the pressure of farm population on productive land resources. This means farm units too small to utilize the available family labor, even in peak seasons, in the prevalent kind of farming.

Throughout the eastern Cotton Belt, as in other agricultural regions, are part-time and even full-time farms that are too small to constitute family operating units. The total number of such farms is not definitely known. But sheer pressure of population on land, as a limiting factor on size of farm operations, is found principally in the Appalachian, Ozark, Ouachita, and similar areas where factors like physical isolation, a high birth rate, and lack of alternative employment or of employment desires have induced continuous subdivision, generation after generation, of the limited productive areas in valleys and on hillsides.

Where insufficient acreage restricts size of operations in a given type of farming, farm alternatives are limited unless more intensive commercial enterprises can be adopted. Otherwise, the only agricultural recourse is to improve the production of subsistence needs until such time as opportunities for off-the-farm employment or for migration to roomier areas become available.

### *Type of Farming and Production per Worker*

In the broad plains, prairies, plateaus, and river bottoms that constitute the remainder of the eastern Cotton Belt, a different situation

prevails. There size of farm operations is limited more by the type of farming followed than by lack of elbow room.

Availability of labor was a factor that influenced the spread of the cotton-type of farming, true, but that type at present does not crowd the available land resources.

Millions of additional acres could be used to produce cotton and other commercial crops if market conditions justified.

In 1934, only 60 percent of the total land area in the eastern Cotton Belt was in farms, and only 42 percent of the farm land was in cropland—of which 15 percent was idle. Considerable variation occurs among individual farms and between areas, of course, but common in the eastern Cotton Belt are farm units of more than 100 acres, with only 25 to 35 acres in cultivation and the remainder mostly left idle except for such fuel, posts, and low-grade grazing as it may provide.

Although much of the eastern Cotton Belt is not highly productive naturally, the land not in cultivation often is as productive as the cropland. This is indicated by the common practice of clearing new land to replace cropland abandoned because of depleted fertility.

### *Present Significance of an Old Problem*

In the extensive Eastern cotton-producing areas in which these conditions prevail, the cotton-corn type of farming has been a small-scale enterprise that has yielded a small volume of products per worker ever since cotton production became important in the United States.

Since that early period, considerable improvement has been accomplished in cotton-production methods, but the adoption of large machinery has lagged, compared to developments in other major farm regions. The acreage of cotton per producer family has been limited chiefly by the quantity of cotton that could be picked by family labor, regardless of how much additional land was available, unless seasonal labor was hired. One man and one mule can produce as much cotton in the eastern Cotton Belt as the farmer's family can pick. For a long time this situation has not changed materially.

Today in the eastern Cotton Belt we find that an ordinary-sized family operates only 10 to 15 acres in cotton (unless additional seasonal labor is hired) plus a few acres in food and feed crops. It has only a few head of livestock to provide for home needs.

If a total production is assumed of 6 to 8 bales of cotton at current prices (and that production is considerably above the average) it is evident that the total cash income available for operating expenses and for living is small. This is true whether the producer is an owner-operator with fixed charges for land payment or whether he is a tenant who pays a share of the crop as rent.

And there, in the small volume of individual production, is a problem that has always existed in the eastern Cotton Belt generally and that became more and more apparent as general economic and social progress indicated the need, and aroused the desire, for levels of living increasingly higher than cotton earnings could finance.

Good roads, automobiles, educational and recreational facilities, improved housing and sanitation, medical and other social services, and other developments ordinarily regarded as components of every-day living nearly all require cash outlays. At the prices that have prevailed, the nineteenth century cotton technology has not been able to provide the necessary funds for these twentieth century needs. True, the occupants of the cabin in the cotton could abandon the land and leave the cabin—and many have—but is there assurance at present of a better place elsewhere?

### *Tenant Mobility and Exploitive Farming*

Certain other important phases of the production situation in the eastern Cotton Belt are associated with the low-income problem. A high tenant mobility attributable, at least in part, to low incomes and a consequent perpetual search for a "better place," together with the general lack of adequate long-term leases, frequently is associated with exploitive farming and a lack of personal interest in maintaining or constructing farm improvements.

Another related difficulty is the lack of soil-conserving measures. This is apparent in the eight major cotton States in the eastern Cotton Belt, in which erosion and gulying have ruined 9,349,000 acres. The lack of soil conservation efforts certainly is not willful, nor can it always be attributed to ignorance, because the lesson of erosion is easily read after every heavy rain. The exploitive farming which permits erosion is both a result and a cause of low incomes on owner-operated and tenant-operated farms.

### *What To Do About It?*

On the basis of present and prospective conditions, types of farming based upon cotton production probably will continue to dominate the agricultural pattern in the region. Important elements in "cotton recovery," then, are the continuation of efforts to adjust cotton supplies and to increase market demand, supplemented by attempts to lower the prices of items bought by farmers. That is part of the way out.

The rest of the way must depend chiefly upon what the farmer himself can or will do and upon the education, guidance, and corrective facilities provided by agencies established to help farmers.

As for improvements in cotton farming as it is now generally practiced, two considerations might furnish points of departure: First, such specialization leaves long periods when labor, work stock, and equipment are idle, and second, the tremendous farm acreage that is not cropped and is mostly unused. But here one must distinguish between adjustments that are immediately feasible and those that can be accomplished only over a period.

*Production adjustments now.*—In previous times of financial stress, cotton farmers generally have fallen back on food and feed production for home use, in order to reduce expenses and offset lowered incomes.

This is one possibility of immediate adjustment. It would effectively use otherwise idle labor and equipment in supplementing consumption that often is inadequate.

A recent investigation by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and agricultural colleges in eight Southern States showed that cotton farmers could produce much more food and feed for home use without increasing the competition in the markets.

The mobility of tenants and the unavailability of land and livestock sometimes hinder the growing of adequate food supplies, but perhaps these are not insuperable difficulties. Adequate farm leases, education, and the use of land released from commercial crops by the A. A. A. programs offer opportunities for effectively encouraging the production of food for use at home.

Closely related to this is the use of available labor and materials to improve farm buildings which often are inadequate on cotton farms. Usually both lumber and labor are plentiful on southeastern cotton farms if one thinks of lumber in terms of growing trees and local sawmills.

In the case of tenants, long-term leases and payment at the termination of tenure for unexhausted improvements mutually agreed upon should furnish incentive for better living and better farming. Advantages therefrom would accrue to tenant and landlord. For tenants and owner-operators generally, community-owned construction equipment and the exchange of labor would make possible an effective cooperation in better farm housing at low cash cost.

The production of commercial "side-line" enterprises to utilize labor and equipment during idle seasons often presents an immediate opportunity to supplement cotton incomes, even when the hour returns of labor are less than from cotton. But diversification that necessitates cash outlays for capital and operating expenses or displaces a part of the usual cotton acreage should be adopted only after judicious study of market outlets and prices, physical production possibilities, and the aptitude of the farmer himself.

*Longer-time production adjustments.*—These measures, largely of a short-term nature, will not in themselves markedly increase average farm incomes in the region—and cash is necessary for many items and services that now are considered necessary. That fact brings us to the proposition that unless commodity prices rise materially above their present levels, a large increase in per capita farm incomes is possible only through an increase in the volume of production per worker. Possibilities for such adjustment are largely of a long-time nature.

One means of increasing the individual worker's production is through the use of larger machinery with our present cropping system. The adoption of one-row cultivating equipment in place of the one-half-row implements commonly used would be a long step forward if the labor saved could be utilized effectively in other ways.

The use of multirow cultivating equipment has increased significantly in recent years in the more level cotton areas in this region, particularly where seasonal labor for picking has been available. But the general use of such equipment will be conditioned upon the perfection and adoption of a mechanical cotton harvester, unless seasonal labor is hired. Moreover, any movement in the direction of increasing the crop acreage per person, with no change in the present area in cropland, would result in serious farm-population displacement unless employment alternatives are available elsewhere.

Similar results would follow a widespread shift from the cotton system to a more extensive use of the present cropland, even if such a change were economically feasible on the basis of production and market possibilities, adjusted land values, taxes, interest payments, and wages.

### *More Effective Use of Land*

Another way to expand the production basis and the worker's income without displacement of the farm population is to supplement the present use of cropland on cotton farms with a more effective use of the land not in crops. By and large, an effective utilization of this noncropland in conjunction with the large reserve of seasonally idle labor on cotton farms is one of the little-explored potentialities in Southern agriculture.

Farm woodlands represent a possible source of income, particularly with the development of pulp and paper mills in areas of rapid tree growth. Improved forestry practices and wood markets might lead to profitable employment for seasonal labor that would otherwise be idle. In general, however, adequate farm-forest management will be conditioned upon the correction of the taxation policy and the economic pressure that frequently force forest depletion and prevent reforestation.

A severance sales tax on forest products rather than an annual tax per acre in woodland is one solution to the first difficulty.

Long-term credit extended at low interest rates, with the growing trees themselves as collateral, not only is a possible solution to the second difficulty, but it also presents opportunity, through credit control, effectively to induce the adoption of improved forest practices on farms. Until these institutional obstacles are removed, farm forestry may continue to be a neglected phase of the farm business regardless of how well the farmer is taught the improved forestry practices.

### ***To Strengthen Production, Income, Buying Power***

The more effective utilization of noncropland for pastures as a basis for extensive livestock enterprises is an open question where upland native pastures are not naturally highly productive and are difficult to keep free of encroaching forest growth. Furthermore, corn yields of 10 to 15 bushels to supplement low-carrying capacity pastures do not make for strong commercial competition for cropland which, with the addition of a little fertilizer, may produce 200 pounds or more of lint cotton per acre. But both feed-yield improvement and pasture improvement represent real possibilities as bases for livestock enterprises that would increase farm incomes by bringing into effective use so-called pastures that are little more than idle land, and by utilizing labor and equipment that are idle a large part of the year.

. . .

This discussion has dealt broadly with some of the fundamental considerations underlying the situation on cotton farms in the eastern Cotton Belt generally. It is recognized, of course, that numerous exceptions exist in terms both of problems and of possible remedial measures.

Application of specific correctives even to the general problems discussed must be adapted to varying needs in different areas, and even on individual farms. Thus, the betterment of conditions inside the cabin in the cotton must depend upon an understanding of local agriculture as well as of the broader economic and social setting of which that agriculture is a part.

But through the maze of local situations and needs, this central theme lends coordinating objectivity to the adaptation of corrective measures: The cabin in the cotton will continue to be dilapidated, its occupants will continue to be inadequately provided for in terms of modern living standards, and market purchases of industrial and other products will continue low until means are found to strengthen the economic basis of production, income, and purchasing power of the occupants of the cabin who depend upon farming for a living.

# Recreation for Farm People

by C. R. DRAPER, E. J. NIEDERFRANK, W. C. McKAIN, JR.

**P**PRIVATE and public interests have gathered a wealth of practical information about the recreational tastes of city dwellers. Much less is known about the rural resident's preferences; yet doubtless his needs, though less acute, are no less real.

The assumption that diversions that satisfy the wants of urbanites will be equally acceptable to rural and farm people is questionable. Country scenery and relaxation in uncrowded surroundings that offer change and enjoyment to city residents can hardly be so satisfying to those whose everyday work is in just such an environment. The urbanite's daily impersonal contacts with large numbers of people puts a premium on dispersive forms of recreation which may not appeal at all to rural dwellers, whose contacts are made in small groups.

## *Another Use for Land*

These considerations may well claim the attention of land use planners, because recreation as an alternative use for land occupies a place of steadily growing importance. The tasks of those charged with administration of public park areas grow more complex as parks multiply and use increases. Whatever sheds light on the questions of whether, and where, and how, to develop recreation sites would seem to be of use both to park administrators and to those interested in rural welfare.

Consequently the effort is being made through studies of existing situations to analyze the needs and available facilities for recreation, so that people and playgrounds may be brought together with a maximum of satisfaction and efficiency. Reported here is a small segment of such a study in Maine, conducted cooperatively by the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the College of Agriculture of the University of Maine, with the assistance of its Coe Research Fund.

## *Parks in a State of Parks*

Until recently, it was tacitly assumed that the inhabitants of Maine were too well provided for by nature to make necessary the creation of public parks. Nevertheless, a sizable proportion of them—principally those with little money—have recreational needs that nature unaided apparently cannot, and certainly does not, supply. That there are such persons is proved by the fact that thousands thronged to newly developed park areas whose exploitation required no more equipment than a means of transportation and perhaps a picnic basket and bathing suit.



As in other States, the Federal Government carried on in Maine a submarginal-land purchase program that in this case involved the allocation of some land for recreational sites. Seven park areas were developed to varying degrees, and in 1939 were leased to the 4-year-old State Park Commission for administration.

One subsequently was turned over to the United States Biological Survey and another to the forestry department of the University of Maine. The acquisition cost the Federal Government what local citizens considered a high price in dollars per acre. Approximately \$400,000 more was spent in developing the sites. So, land-use planners would seem justified in inquiring what sort of recreational returns citizens of the surrounding areas received.

In six of these parks, scattered through southern and western Maine, information was obtained by means of simple card schedules presented by enumerators to motorists as they entered the parks. The counting was done from mid-July to early October 1939, for an average of 30 days in each park, and covered 50 to 75 percent of all cars entering five of the parks, and about 20 percent of those at Sebago Lake.

The six parks, all but one of them in townships with populations of less than 1,000, are rural in setting. To reach them, urban people had to travel up to three and one-half times as far as visitors from rural places. But, nevertheless, a relatively low proportion of farm persons were represented in the sample of park visitors.

Of the areas around the parks from which a total of 92 percent of the Maine visitors was drawn, the total population was estimated in 1935 at 499,336, about 61 percent of the State's population. Twenty percent of this number was reported in 1935 as farm population; but of those visitors to the park areas who were counted in the study, only 7.6 percent were farm dwellers.

This table shows the number and percentage of automobiles from farms in Maine:

| Park                  | All Maine cars | Cars from farms |         |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------|
|                       |                | Number          | Percent |
| Old Town .....        | 427            | 18              | 4.2     |
| St. George Lake ..... | 317            | 49              | 15.5    |
| Webb Beach .....      | 579            | 34              | 5.9     |
| Center Hill .....     | 155            | 13              | 8.4     |
| Sebago Lake .....     | 499            | 17              | 2.9     |
| Pownall .....         | 147            | 30              | 20.4    |
| Total .....           | 2,124          | 161             | 7.6     |

Because there was an average of 44 persons for each 10 cars, the sample represents something over 9,300 visitors of whom about 700 were farm residents.

### *The Importance of Distance*

The difference in the case of total rural-urban distribution is also marked. On the basis of 1935 estimates, 45 percent of the area's inhabitants were rural, whereas only 30 percent of the park visitors from the same area were from rural places. It was found also that the percentages of visitors from rural and urban places varied considerably between parks. The relatively high proportion of urban visitors to Old Town and Sebago Lake may be explained by their proximity and accessibility to cities.

Farm residents in the zones served by the parks are not taking advantage of the facilities offered. The reason cannot be that the parks were too close at hand to exert attraction for nearby rural people, or a greater proportion of them would have attended the other more distant parks. Actually, however, results of the study show that only one of the parks (Sebago) encroached to any extent on areas served by the others. Moreover, farmers who did make use of the parks tended to travel shorter distances than other visitors.

Professional persons travelled an average of 33 miles to a park; skilled workers, 30 miles; semiskilled, 26; unskilled, 24; and farmers, 18. The average distance travelled to all parks was 27, with a variation of 9 to 41 miles.

### *Which Parks Do Farmers Like?*

One explanation why relatively few farm people visited the parks may be found by analyzing the occupation groups and income levels of families represented in the sample. The standardized resale values of all automobiles driven by those in the sample were obtained to give some idea of income levels represented. According to this measure the farmers had the lowest income level of all occupation groupings. Moreover, there was a positive association between income levels, and the distances visitors were willing to travel for recreation. This would suggest that a park-development program designed for farm and rural village people in Maine must be located within a short distance of the population to be served.

Another reason for the smaller proportion of farm people visiting the sites may be that the facilities and activities offered did not appeal to farm folk. Not much is known concerning the type of park that will attract the rural-farm population, and the survey under discussion can add little to this information, since it dealt with a selected sample, namely, those

who were attracted by existing facilities. It is possible that more farm people would patronize a different type of recreational development.

The study did show that there was a higher proportion of young people among farm visitors than among nonfarm visitors. Perhaps adults in the farm population are not interested in this type of recreation to the extent that adults in the general population are, or else the existing recreation facilities appealed more to farm children than to their parents.

### *Facilities for the Whole Family*

At any rate, a tentative conclusion may be that in order to attract farm and village people, future recreation areas should have facilities which would appeal to younger folk, or perhaps facilities appreciated by all members of family groups, particularly since population estimates agree in showing that ratios of children to adults will, for several generations at least, remain higher among rural groups than in the urban population.

Recreation in Maine has already prompted some discussion by county land-use committees, but in each case interest has centered around ways and means of persuading out-of-State visitors to turn a greater proportion of their yearly tribute to this or that locality. Practical-minded committeemen were well aware that the yearly revenue from Maine tourists has topped the hundred-million-dollar mark. But it would seem that an equally practical consideration is that of developing recreation facilities for local people.

Future submarginal-land-purchase programs of both the Federal and State Governments will operate in rural areas some distance removed from urban centers, for submarginal land is seldom found in the vicinity of cities. One of the alternative uses for the land so purchased will be recreation. The farm population will be able to make most use of these areas because of their favorable location and farmers should be encouraged to suggest the improvements and facilities that will best meet their needs and desires.

### *Planning for Parks*

The land-use-planning program, particularly on the community level, may be overlooking an opportunity to guide the development of recreation areas for rural people. At the present time, committee members in many States are being asked to classify land unsuited for agriculture according to its best alternative use. In cases where that alternative use is recreation, committees should go further and specify the kinds of development and facilities which would best serve the interests of local people. If this were done, it is likely that a greater proportion of farm families would make use of parks located in their vicinity.

# Conservation to Improve Tenure

by M. E. HAYS and D. D. HAMMERLY

**T**ENANT farmers on small acreages can participate in soil improvement.

A group of such farmers in Iowa, through cooperative action, have found soil building not only possible and advantageous, but also a strong argument with their landlords to give them more secure tenure on their farms.

A manure spreader cooperative—it may seem a small item—has been organized, and 20 spreaders obtained, by 43 farmers in Washington County, Iowa. The farmers, all borrowers from the Farm Security Administration, are tenants on comparatively small farms and are trying to follow the best farm-management practices, to rehabilitate both themselves and the land on which they live.

They are interested in rebuilding soil—not their soil, but their landlords' soil. They expect in return to improve their tenure relationships. They realize that a shortage of farms exists in Iowa, and that thousands of farmers are being displaced every year.

## *5,000 Farmers Without Farms*

A recent check in Iowa counties showed that 442 out of 9,800 Farm Security Administration standard borrowers lost their farms and were unable to find new locations for the 1940 crop year. Another 1,095 persons, applicants eligible for FSA loans, were unable to find farms, while the FSA's county supervisors estimated that another 3,388 farmers could not get locations. In all, it was conservatively estimated that 5,000 farmers in Iowa could not find a place to farm during 1940.

The Washington County borrowers want to stay where they are and believe by using the best soil-building practices they will have a much better opportunity for security of tenure.

Manure can be spread without the use of a spreader, but the Iowans realized that more acreage can be covered and more efficient use made with mechanical equipment than with a wagon and a pitchfork. The manure-spreader cooperative grew from small group meetings between borrowers and Rural Rehabilitation Supervisor Cecil F. Rooks.

When the problem of buying spreaders was presented to them, they recognized the need and responded immediately, but they also realized that the capital investment was not justified on each individual farm. There were consequently other problems involved, which they took immediate steps to solve.

## *Problems of Cooperation*

Could they work together? Who would use the spreader first?

Would the other fellow take care of it? Who would pay for the repairs? All these problems were worked out by the farmers themselves by discussing them frankly at their small group meetings.

When a number of the small cooperatives developed, FSA District Supervisor Paul F. McLean and State Cooperative Specialist D. D. Hammerly were called in to conduct a series of meetings among the borrowers. It was agreed in these meetings that 20 small cooperatives should be organized, to buy the spreaders, all joining in a larger cooperative to make the most advantageous purchase.

At a meeting of the larger group a committee was selected to act for all members in the purchase of the equipment. They canvassed dealers and gave each an opportunity to bid. Ten dealers and factory representatives appeared before the group to discuss the merits of their particular spreader with the committee. When all bids were in, the committee entered into an agreement with one dealer for all the machines. The cooperative purchase of 20 machines resulted in a saving of 24 percent from the list price.

### *The Landowners Are Pleased*

Arrangements were then made to have the spreaders shipped to the dealer's place of business, knocked down. Upon their arrival, all members of the cooperative went to the dealer's warehouse, where they first watched trained mechanics assemble a few of the spreaders, and then, under the mechanics' guidance, assembled and greased the remainder for themselves. Every member of the group thus learned about the construction, operation, repairs, and maintenance of the new equipment.

Besides, the men learned the principles of the Farm Security Administration's Community and Cooperative Service program, and were ready to make use of it in later problems.

The activities of the cooperatives went further. Meetings were held with the landowners whose farms would be benefited. Many landowners expressed satisfaction and gave assurances that they would be agreeable to more secure tenure arrangements for such progressive tenants.

This group approach to the soil-building problem of small farmers aroused great local interest. It demonstrated that farm operators themselves can solve many problems through cooperation; that they can participate in soil-building programs, and that substantial savings were available through group purchases. It provided an educational opportunity for the participants, both in the operation of their new spreaders and in the possibilities of cooperative action, through the Farm Security Administration's Community and Cooperative program, in matters like getting equipment for liming and marl mining, terracing, drainage, land clearance, prevention of wind erosion, and conservation and development of water facilities.

# The Migrants

*This article is the last of a series concerning migration to the Far Western States during the past decade.*

## VI. Migration to California

by SEYMOUR J. JANOW and DAVIS McENTIRE

**M**IGRATION to California during the past decade, about which so much discussion and controversy have centered, represents the latest stage in a long history of population movement to this State.

For a century, California has been widely regarded as a place of unusual opportunities, and its population, commerce, and industry have been continuously increased by the migration of people and capital from other States and foreign countries.

From 380,000 persons in 1860, the population in California increased to 5,677,000 in 1930—a growth of 1,500 percent in 70 years and nearly four times as rapidly as that of the national population during the same period.

Only a small part of this increase has been due to natural growth. It is estimated from census data that approximately nine-tenths of the increase in the population of California in the 8 decades was due to migration. The largest migration to California, both in number and relative to the population already in the State, took place between 1920 and 1930, when more than 2 million persons entered the State. The number of people moving to California in the 1920's constituted a larger addition than has been made to the population of any State by internal migration within any 10-year period in American history.<sup>1</sup> Even in 1930, 2 out of every 3 persons in California had been born outside the State.

### *Once a Welcome, Now Unfriendliness*

While commerce and industry were expanding, fertile lands remained unoccupied, and additional agricultural laborers were needed, this immigration was regarded as an adjunct to the general prosperity and doubtless intensified the expansion of economic activities. Then, there was

<sup>1</sup> By 1930 all the States west of the Mississippi River, except California, Oregon, Nevada, and Arizona, were losing more people than they were gaining through migration. National Resources Committee, "The Problems of a Changing Population." 1938. Page 91.

a fair chance that every migrant would find employment and even a welcome in the economic and social life of his new community.

The movement of population to California has continued since 1930, but during that decade in a setting of industrial and agricultural depression and widespread unemployment; newcomers have been conspicuous proportions of the State's depression problems of relief, unemployment, health, housing, and others. The word "migrant" in California has come to be synonymous with "indigent" and habitual "migratory workers."

In contrast with previous decades, popular attitudes toward newcomers have been actively hostile in many quarters and unfriendly almost anywhere. An example was the "bum blockade" maintained by the Los Angeles city police during the fall of 1935 at the southeastern border of California. The police turned back or arrested migrants without means of support and presumably bound for Los Angeles.

Another example was the organization in 1938 of the California Citizen's Association, which called upon the people of the State to "use every effort to discourage this migration both at its sources and its destination, or be overwhelmed by economic chaos and financial ruin."

Migrants were described thus by the Association: "Great numbers of them do not read. What limited information they get on public affairs is by means of radio, and word of mouth. Generally speaking they have had neither the income, the education, the skill nor the desire to attain to California's normal standard of living."

### *The Time of the Migration*

Part of this general attitude is the prevailing impression that the migration to California during the past decade has been of a magnitude unprecedented in the history of the State.

The number of migrants to California during the 1930's has not yet been approximated from the 1940 census, but data from a survey by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics provide a basis for a rough estimate. This survey, in cooperation with the California Department of Education, enumerated more than 187,000 school children, representing more than 116,000 families who had arrived since 1929. It is estimated that 84 percent of all the families with school children eligible for inclusion were counted. Hence, it is probable that there were in California in the spring of 1939 approximately 139,000 families that had entered the State after 1929 and that these families had 239,000 children in public schools at the time of the survey. The study did not enumerate unattached persons or families without school children.

Assuming that the proportion of school children in the total population migrating to California is about the same as in the general population

of the areas from which these migrants came, one can estimate that approximately 1,100,000 persons moved to California after 1929 and were still in the State in the spring of 1939.<sup>2</sup>

This number is not an estimate of net population increase in California during this period, as departures from the State and the balance of births and deaths in the State have not been taken into account.

The net addition to the population by migration from 1930-39 is undoubtedly somewhat smaller than the estimated number of persons moving into the State; however, even if it is assumed that during the entire decade 1,250,000 persons have been added to the population as a result of migration, this number is 750,000 less than the number migrating to California between 1920-30. Migration during the 1920's made a net addition of more than 60 percent to the population of California in 1920; with the maximum assumptions the 1930-40 migration has not added more than 22 percent to the State's 1930 population.

### *Sources of the Migration*

Migrants to California during the 1930's were drawn from virtually all occupations, from servants and unskilled laborers to the most highly trained professional persons. Questionnaires were returned by children from families of nationally known motion-picture stars as well as from migratory agricultural workers.

Agricultural people were an important element in the migrating population, but, contrary to popular impression, they were by no means predominant. Less than one-fourth of all families enumerated in the migration survey had been engaged in agriculture either as farmers or farm laborers before migration.<sup>3</sup>

Most farm workers migrating to California in the 1930's came from the Southern Plains States. Approximately one-fourth of all enumerated

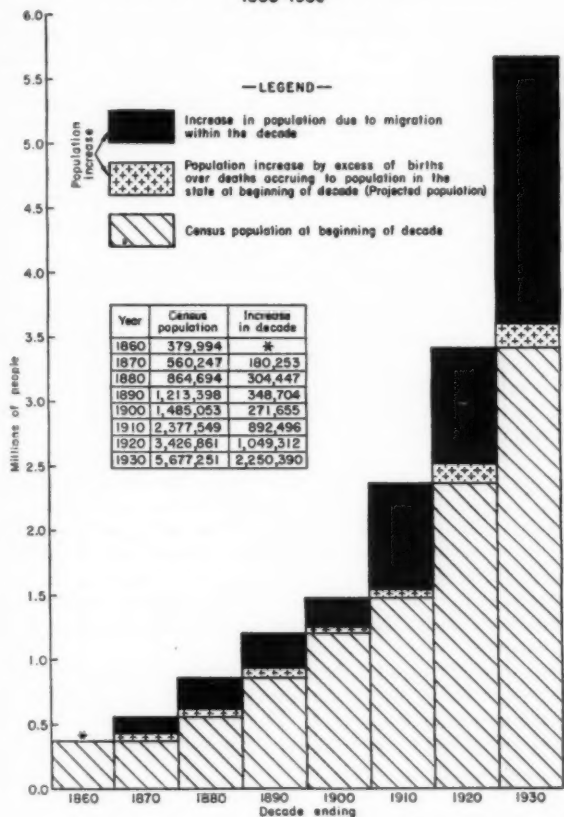
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<sup>2</sup> To each child enrolled in public schools in the States which contributed most heavily to the California migration, there were approximately 4.6 persons in the population. Therefore, the total number migrating would be the estimated eligible pupils in California schools,  $239,000 \times 4.6$  or 1,100,000 persons.

<sup>3</sup> Occupations of migrant family heads, both before migration and at the time of the survey, were determined from pupils' replies to questions regarding parents' occupations and industries. Occupations were classified according to the U. S. Census—"Alphabetical Index of Occupations, 1930." Occupational group classifications were based on Alba M. Edwards' "A Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States, 1930." In this connection, the average age of pupils returning questionnaires was 13 years and the standard deviation from this average was 2 years. In most cases more than one questionnaire was received per family and data were coded for a given family head after considering all replies.



FIGURE 1. - CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION GROWTH BY DECADES AS CAUSED BY NATURAL INCREASE AND MIGRATION  
1860-1930



\* Census data incomplete for 1850

families who were engaged in agriculture before migration lived in Oklahoma in 1930. Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri were the States of residence, in 1930, of more than half of the agricultural families enumerated. Most of the other agricultural families came from Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa, and South Dakota, in the order named.

In contrast with the concentration of agricultural families in Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri, less than 20 percent of all nonagricultural families reported these States as their residence in 1930. Eleven percent of the nonagricultural families were in the New England and Middle Atlantic States, 15 percent were in the East North Central States, 20 percent in the West North Central States and 24 percent in the Mountain and Pacific States in 1930.

Striking concentrations are observed in the cities of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri, and around Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, Omaha, Wichita, Denver, Salt Lake City, Spokane, Seattle, and Portland.

Four percent of the families were in California in 1930 but left the State and returned later.

In general, the attracting power of California continued in the decade of the 1930's and drew agricultural population mainly from the States of the Southwest and the Great Plains; and other occupational groups from the urban centers of the country, in important proportions, from as far east as the Atlantic Seaboard. Only 3 percent of the families came from foreign countries.

The migration to California during the past decade reached a peak in 1936 and 1937; half of the enumerated families came in the 3-year period, 1936-38. Arrivals of agricultural families were more highly concentrated in 1936 and 1937 than was true of the nonagricultural migrants but the differences as between occupational groups were not substantial.

Marked differences in timing, however, were apparent as between various regions of origin. Nearly half of the migrants from the Southwest came to California during 1936 and 1937, following severe droughts in 1934 and 1936.

Arrivals from the Great Lake States and the Atlantic Seaboard were more evenly distributed over the 9-year period, with approximately 30 percent arriving in 1936 and 1937. The inflow from Oregon and Washington was practically constant during the entire period.

### *Areas of Settlement*

Contrary to common belief, migration to California during the 1930's was not a haphazard drifting of a chronically migratory group, trying to find by a process of trial and error a habitable place to settle. The evidence is clear that, for the majority of families, migration was a direct

RESIDENCE IN 1930 OF 19,786 AGRICULTURAL FAMILIES\* MOVING TO CALIFORNIA  
1930-39

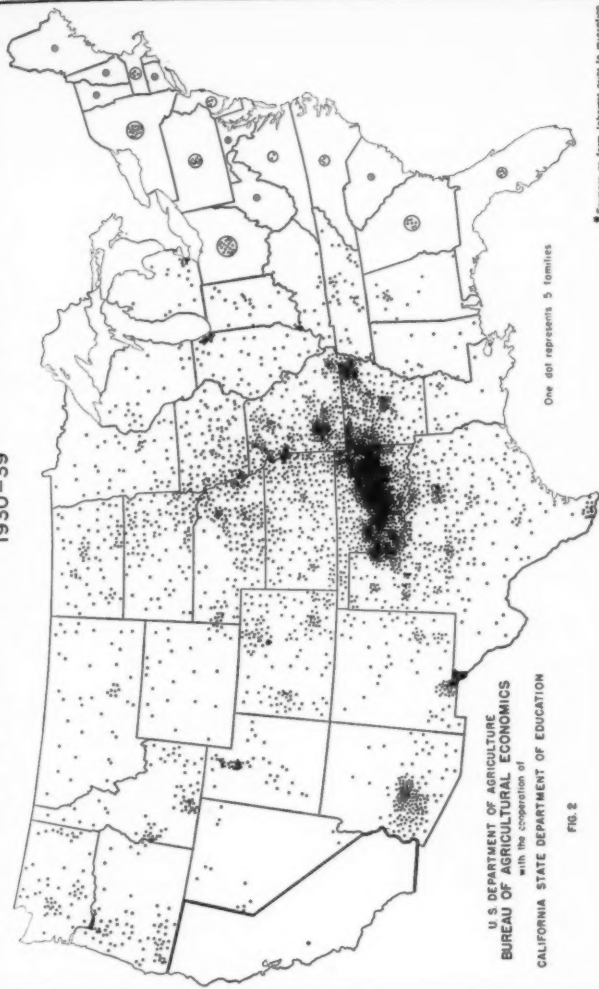


FIG. 2

and purposeful move to places in California selected on the basis of former occupational experience as relatively promising in opportunities for employment.

Approximately 60 percent of the families enumerated moved directly to the counties in which they were living in 1939.

Even among those families who reported themselves as agricultural laborers in California in 1939, more than half said they had lived continuously in the same county since their arrival in the State; three-fourths of these families reported they had lived continuously in the counties where they were enumerated from within a year of the time they entered the State.

In general, the former occupational experience of the migrant families seems to have largely guided their selection of places to settle in California. More than half of the families settling in California's richest agricultural valley had been engaged in agriculture before migration. Few of the clerical class, or of the professional workers, settled there. The families whose former occupations were largely in professional, managerial, clerical, skilled labor, and other labor groups migrated to counties with large urban centers, where California commerce and industry are concentrated. Only 11 percent of the enumerated families in the metropolitan counties had been engaged in agriculture before they moved. But nearly three-fourths of those who had been farmers and four-fifths of the former farm laborers settled in communities of less than 10,000 population.

Of all families included in the survey (116,000), more than three-fourths settled in urban areas—cities of 2,500 population and larger. Nearly 40 percent settled in cities of over 100,000 population, 23 percent in the city of Los Angeles alone.

### *Uneven Distribution*

While the impact of the migration, as measured by the ratio of newcomers to the resident population of the State, was not so great during the 1930's as in most other decades, local difficulties attendant upon the movement have in part resulted from the uneven distribution of the newcomers. Some counties have received few migrants in relation to their 1930 population, but others have experienced disproportionately large increases due to migration (table 1).

Four metropolitan counties that had 64 percent of the State's population in 1930 received only 61 percent of the enumerated families. Los Angeles County, however, did receive in addition to its 1930 population a higher proportion of the enumerated families. San Joaquin Valley counties, with 10 percent of the State's population in 1930, received 15 percent of the survey families. In the State as a whole, the school survey enumerated 21 migrant families to each 1,000 population accord-

**RESIDENCE IN 1930 OF 69,896 NON-AGRICULTURAL FAMILIES\* MOVING TO CALIFORNIA  
1930-39**

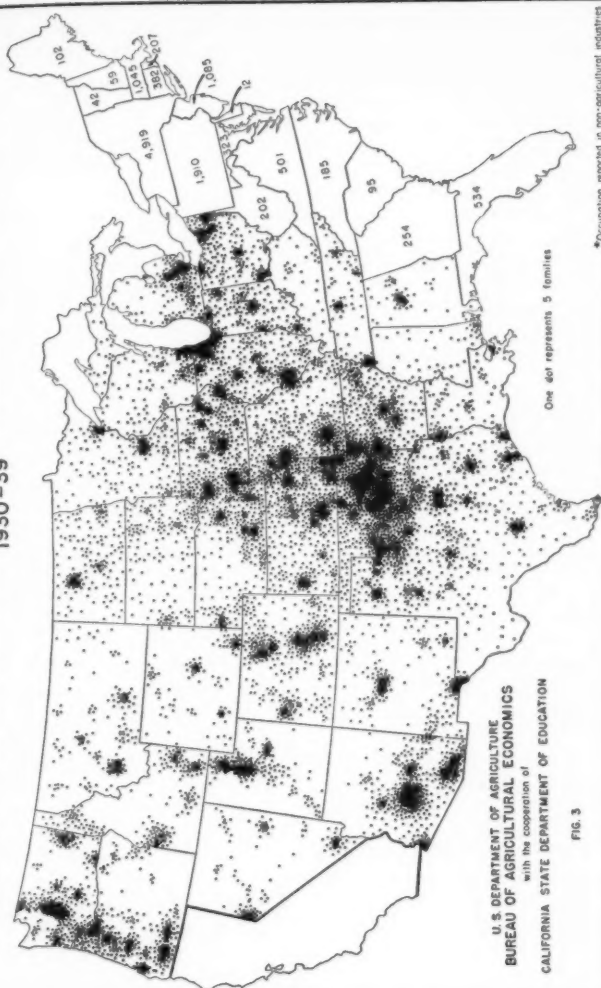


FIG. 3

ing to 1930 figures. However, in Kern County in the southern San Joaquin Valley, there were 51 survey families per 1,000 of 1930 population. Several other valley counties received a similarly disproportionate share of the newcomers.

The California Taxpayer's Association reported a 70-percent increase in the population of Kern County since 1930.

More than half of the migrants to the San Joaquin Valley had been engaged in agriculture before migrating to California. In large part these are the families that are meant when the terms "migrant" or "drought refugees" are used. Unable to afford productive farm land, or even lots, within the older communities, newcomers to whom a lot and a shack are symbols of a new start, have settled in thousands on the fringes of cities and towns in the California valleys. The result has been the development of new slums surrounding the valley communities. These new shacktowns often are known to the older communities as "Little Oklahomas."

### *Occupations and Occupational Adjustments*

As indicated previously, migrants to California have been drawn from many occupations and generally are a cross section of the occupational structure of the States from which they came. This is shown in figure 4 by comparing the occupational group distribution of the survey family heads from seven regions with the distribution of all gainfully employed males in the population of these regions.

Because of the large number of families from Oklahoma, this State has been shown separately. The proportion of farmers and farm laborers among the families migrating from Oklahoma is somewhat greater than the proportion in the working population of Oklahoma in 1930. Proprietors, managers, and professional persons were somewhat underrepresented among the Oklahomans. In all regions, except Oklahoma, migration to California drew more heavily on nonagricultural groups than on the farmers and farm laborers. There was a marked tendency for both farmers and farm laborers to remain in the areas losing population to California.

Among the nonagricultural classes, professional persons, proprietors, managers, clerical workers, and semiskilled workers were substantially overrepresented in the survey group. Unskilled laborers and domestic servants were underrepresented.

The distribution of occupations pursued by migrant family heads in California in 1939 was strikingly similar to the occupational structure of the California population in 1930. This is not surprising as it probably can be assumed that employment opportunities in California are likely to be roughly proportional to the numbers already employed in the various occupations.

TABLE 1.—*Families enumerated in California migration survey in 1939 as distributed by counties of residence in California and compared with distribution of California's population in 1930*

| California<br>(county of residence)    | Enumerated<br>families |         | Population in<br>1930 |         | Number<br>of enu-<br>merated<br>families<br>per 1,000<br>population |
|--|------------------------|---------|-----------------------|---------|---|
|  | Number                 | Percent | Number                | Percent |   |
| State total .....                      | 116,333                | 100.0   | 5,677,321             | 100.0   | 21  |
| San Joaquin Valley<br>counties .....   | 16,831                 | 14.5    | 543,269               | 9.6     | 31  |
| Fresno .....                           | 3,099                  | 2.7     | 144,379               | 2.5     | 22  |
| Kern .....                             | 4,185                  | 3.6     | 82,570                | 1.5     | 51  |
| Kings .....                            | 690                    | .6      | 25,385                | .4      | 27  |
| Madera .....                           | 744                    | .6      | 17,164                | .3      | 43  |
| Merced .....                           | 926                    | .8      | 36,748                | .7      | 25  |
| San Joaquin .....                      | 2,062                  | 1.8     | 102,940               | 1.8     | 20  |
| Stanislaus .....                       | 1,580                  | 1.4     | 56,641                | 1.0     | 28  |
| Tulare .....                           | 3,545                  | 3.0     | 77,442                | 1.4     | 46  |
| Sacramento Valley <sup>1</sup> .....   | 5,566                  | 4.8     | 301,578               | 5.3     | 19  |
| Southern California <sup>2</sup> ..... | 11,720                 | 10.1    | 514,644               | 9.1     | 23  |
| Coast counties <sup>3</sup> .....      | 6,997                  | 6.0     | 488,588               | 8.6     | 14  |
| Mountain counties <sup>4</sup> .....   | 4,652                  | 4.0     | 223,206               | 3.9     | 21  |
| Metropolitan coun-<br>ties .....       | 70,567                 | 60.6    | 3,606,036             | 63.5    | 20  |
| Alameda .....                          | 5,504                  | 4.7     | 474,883               | 8.3     | 12  |
| Contra Costa .....                     | 1,374                  | 1.2     | 78,608                | 1.4     | 18  |
| Los Angeles .....                      | 52,715                 | 45.3    | 2,208,492             | 38.9    | 24  |
| San Diego .....                        | 6,272                  | 5.4     | 209,659               | 3.7     | 30  |
| San Francisco .....                    | 4,702                  | 4.0     | 634,394               | 11.2    | 7   |

<sup>1</sup> *Sacramento Valley counties: Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Sacramento, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Yolo, Yuba.*

<sup>2</sup> *Southern California counties: Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura.*

<sup>3</sup> *Coast counties: Lake, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma.*

<sup>4</sup> *Mountain counties: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, Eldorado, Humboldt, Inyo, Lassen, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Trinity, Tuolumne.*

Relatively, more of the enumerated families were farm laborers, semi-skilled laborers, and skilled workers, than among the resident population in 1930, but the differences are not outstanding.

## *A Net Shift Out of Agriculture*

The process of adjustment by the newcomers to employment opportunities in California required much shifting from one occupation to another. The number of farmers among the group as a whole had decreased by three-fourths from the number who were farmers before coming to California; farm laborers had increased from 8 percent to 12 percent of all families, but the net effect when both agricultural groups are considered together has been a net shift out of agriculture following migration to California.

Very few of the agricultural migrants to California had succeeded in establishing themselves as farmers; the great majority of those engaged in agriculture were working as hired laborers.

The shifting of occupations was considerable among all occupational groups but greatest among the former farmers, only 14 percent of whom became farmers in California. Most of this group became farm laborers and skilled and semiskilled workers.

The professional classes showed the greatest occupational stability, but even among them only three-fourths of those who had been in the professional classes before coming to California were still in this group in California in 1939. Nearly two-thirds of the former skilled workers were still members of this class subsequent to their migration. In general, the greatest occupational changes took place among agricultural and unskilled labor groups.

Of the family heads who before migration were unemployed, on W. P. A., or receiving relief, 36 percent were reported to be in these groups in California. Twenty-one percent of the former farm laborers, 19 percent of the unskilled laborers, and 16 percent of the former farmers were reported as unemployed, on W. P. A., or on relief in California. Only 7 percent of the former clerical workers and 3 percent of the former professional persons, however, were reported as unemployed, on W. P. A., or receiving relief in California. By this index, the agricultural and unskilled labor groups were the least successful in establishing themselves in California.

## *Significance of the Migration*

Within California the prevailing attitude toward present migration is one of fear and dismay, if not active hostility.

With the declared purpose of discouraging the entry of needy migrants, the California legislature in 1940 increased residence requirements for legal settlement (a prerequisite for relief) from 1 to 3 years. A report of the California State Chamber of Commerce, *The Migrants*, published in May 1940, reflected the general feeling that the migration is dangerous to the welfare of the State and should be restrained.



Figure 4 Percentage distribution of male heads of enumerated families by former occupational groups by regions of 1930 residence; and comparison with distribution of all gainfully occupied males in those regions according to the 1930 census.

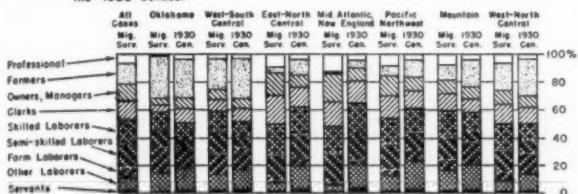


Figure 4a Male heads of enumerated families by 1939 occupational groups and former occupational groups as per cent of total.

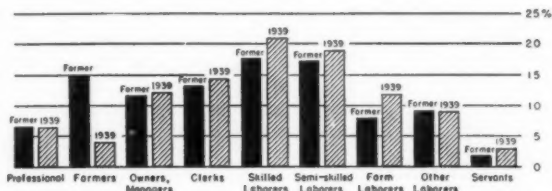
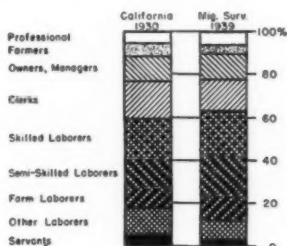


Figure 4b Percentage distribution of employed male heads of enumerated families by 1939 occupational groups in California compared with distribution of all gainfully occupied males in California according to the 1930 census



The report said: "The best available evidence indicates that this State not only cannot hope in the near future to adjust its economy to adequately employ those already her, but that should the inflow of depression migrants from the Great Plains and Southwestern Cotton States continue at anything like the scale of the past 5 years, it will seriously disrupt the economy of California, jeopardizing wage scales, living standards, and social-welfare programs."

### *If There Were No Migration*

Expressions of dismay as to the great public costs of relief, education, and health services attendant upon this migration invariably are focused on the distressed group of migrants and omit reference to considerations as to what the level of the same public costs would have been in the absence of migration.

California has the lowest birth rate in the nation; without any migration into or out of the State and the same birth and death rates, California's population would have ceased to grow after 1940 and by 1950 would be less than it had been in 1935.<sup>4</sup> Without migration the number in the young age groups would shrink and there would be a substantial increase in both the number and proportion of old persons in the population.

Economic depression, unemployment, and social maladjustments in California during the 1930's are probably reflections of a general depression, rather than the result of an unprecedented migration. Circumstances suggest that the distressed migrant of today has but followed an honorable tradition of moving in search of opportunity, and there is evidence that the newcomers are being assimilated into California's economy. With a substantial resumption of general business activity, it is likely that present trends toward economic assimilation of the migrants would be strengthened. It would be a rash prophet who would predict early cessation of the expansive character of California's economy.

*(The authors acknowledge the cooperation of the California Department of Education and the assistance of Walter E. Morgan, Assistant Superintendent of Education, and Lillian B. Hill, Chief of the Bureau of Attendance and Migratory Education. The authors are indebted to Elizabeth Fine, who supervised the statistical work, and to Howard Finn, WPA Project Supervisor. Assistance in the preparation of these data was provided by personnel of Work Projects Administration official project 65-2-08-101.)*

<sup>4</sup>Thompson, Warren S., Welpton, P. K. *California Population Estimates to 1960*. Los Angeles Bureau of Municipal Research, 1935.

# The Geese and the Golden Eggs

by ELLERY A. FOSTER

**T**WO MEN each had a goose that laid golden eggs. Both knew that it is foolish to kill geese that lay golden eggs.

One of the men let his goose run in the fields and forests, picking her own living. She came home frequently and deposited a golden egg beside the doorstep.

The other man had a different plan. He followed his goose and observed her eating habits. He found that she preferred certain plants. The owner grew those plants in a special garden so that the goose would have plenty of her favorite foods. And the goose, eating more of them, began to lay more eggs, and the man prospered. He experimented and developed a feeding plan that kept the goose in the best laying condition.

Meanwhile, the man who left his goose to forage for herself noticed that she was laying fewer and fewer eggs. She ate the natural plants that she liked down to the roots. They became scarce. Then she had to eat foods that were not so good and that is why her egg production declined. Finally, this owner became desperate. Weeks had passed since she had laid an egg and it had been days since he had eaten. He looked longingly at the goose and thought how delectable roast goose would taste. But he didn't want to kill a goose that laid golden eggs. He thought and thought about it.

## *One Man Is Worried*

After an interval, the fowl laid another golden egg, but the man was worried. He realized that he might have to wait several weeks until he got another egg. So he decided on a new policy. He lived more frugally, so that there would be less danger of going hungry before the goose laid again. By this policy, he was able to get along fairly well. He gradually reduced his standard of living, and he was able to eat every day, although his fare was simple and meager compared to what it had been.

The man reconciled himself to the change. He said: "The old days are gone. The virgin resources have dwindled. My goose and I must learn to subsist on less and less. By using less today I will have more tomorrow. My planned economizing is conservation, and it is necessary at the present stage of my life."

He took to reading books on economics, trying to learn how to economize more effectively.

The other man went on experimenting. He allowed his goose to set on one of the eggs and a gosling was hatched. The man felt greatly

relieved, because he had worried over what would become of him when the goose grew old and died. Now, he felt, his future was assured. He would go on raising food for the goose and the gosling.

As the gosling grew up, it began to lay golden eggs, and finally the first goose died, but the man went on having a good life, busy part of the time caring for his second goose and garden and part of the time enjoying the leisure and comfort that they provided him. He was proud of his foresight and planning.

### *The Other Has Abundance*

He said: "I have learned to work with nature and not against her. Because of it I can look ahead to abundance through all the years of my life. Even my children can have abundance if they follow the technology I have developed."

He read books on conservation and nature.

As time went on, the man whose conservation plan was that of economizing, had to scrimp more and more, because his goose, having to live off poorer and poorer food plants, laid few and fewer eggs. Finally he began buying feed for the goose. That helped in egg production, but it cut down on what the man could spend for himself. A time came when, with the best system of economy the man could work out, he was still hungry, too hungry to live without more food than he was able to purchase after buying for the goose. So he decided on a drastic course. He amputated his goose's wings and ate roast goose wings. Later he amputated the goose's legs and after that the wingless, legless goose lay in a box eating the food the man brought it, and occasionally laying an egg. Eventually the time between eggs became so long that the man was starving. Then to head off starvation a little longer, he killed and ate what was left of his goose that had laid golden eggs.

## Contributors to this Issue

**F**RED A. CLARENBACH'S article is a report on an intensive study of local government in several central Missouri counties. His purpose was to establish some principles of reorganization for that and similar areas. He undertook the survey because of a combination of circumstances: The public purchase of much land in the area, the necessity for moving a county seat, reforestation, the realization of the need for a new land use pattern, resettlement plans, and the lowering of the tax base. Mr. Clarenbach, a native Missourian, is an associate agricultural economist in the Division of Land Economics, Bureau of Agricultural Economics. He is stationed at Columbia, Mo.

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College of the Pacific and has done graduate work in rural sociology in the University of Connecticut. E. J. NIEDERFRANK is a professor of agricultural economics and rural sociology in the University of Maine, W. C. McKAIN, JR. is Northeastern Regional leader of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare, stationed in Upper Darby, Pa. He is a Harvard graduate and is preparing his doctor's dissertation on rural recreation. He writes that he would like to have comments from readers on aspects of recreation in other parts of the country.

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## Books

WHY FARMERS ARE POOR. *Anna Rochester. International Publishers. New York. 317 pp. 1940.*

by MORRIS B. STORER

AT A TIME when the sentence, "We've got to do something about our economic system," is so often spoken as to be almost a household phrase, yet when vagueness and evasion almost as often mark "the next

paragraph," a book that sets out frankly and specifically to suggest what that "something" is takes on clear significance. Anna Rochester's "Why Farmers Are Poor" is such a book.

Here analysis is probing, uncompromising, relentlessly "radical" in its socialism. Readers will differ in their estimate of that analysis and of the program of agricultural and general economic reform that she proposes. But they will agree that she has turned up with her critical spade some principal roots of the Nation's predicament. Her writing wins respect by its studiousness and the general care of its documentation; her proposals provoke thought. She has taken her stand. Here is evangelism quiet and cool on the surface, seething underneath.

The story of farm poverty in this country, as Miss Rochester sees it, is the story of farmer exploitation in a capitalist society. Agriculture from the beginnings of capitalism has been tied up with it. The farmer has always been in greater or less measure a "business man, subject to general business conditions determined by the forces inherent in capitalist society." The increasing dependence of farmers on the market is the primary clue to the understanding of the development of agriculture since the middle of the nineteenth century, with the revolutionary changes in farming technique and the greatly heightened contrasts between rich farms and poor farms.

Why are farmers poor? Why is it that after paying its toll of rent and interest to nonfarm capitalists, the farm population—representing one-fourth of the total in the United States—had an income from agriculture that represented less than 9 percent of the total national income? Primarily because of monopolistic controls of the farmer's market. The farmers of the country, producing on a freely competitive basis, have "failed to create market outlets of their own strong enough to bargain on equal terms with the small groups of wealthy traders and processors."

At the base of the whole difficulty is monopoly pressure on farm produce prices from such agencies as "the giant millers and bakers, canners and meat-packers, dairy trusts and tobacco manufacturers, which under cover of performing a genuine economic function push down prices paid to the farmers and push up the prices they extract from consumers."

**W**HY ARE farmers poor? Because monopoly control of the market drives the individual farmer to raise productivity by improving technique and consequently by enlarging his scale of production. These, in turn, drive all but the few to dependence on capital borrowed from the accumulations of nonfarm capitalists, to deeper debt, to eventual insecurity and poverty. "Mortgages, tenancy, insecurity on the land; poorly equipped farms in competition with efficiently mechanized farms; low prices and restricted markets; domination by traders and processors,

by corporation lenders and landlords." Thus Miss Rochester sums up the forces at work.

But of most direct importance in American farm poverty is the paralysis of wage-worker purchasing power due to the bogging down of capitalism. Over and over again Miss Rochester emphasizes the importance to agriculture and to the Nation of the farmer's making common cause with the industrial workers of the city, recognizing their common interests, and pressing for programs commonly contrived.

How much has been accomplished in the New Deal years toward the solution of these problems? The accomplishments are unimpressive to the author. Despite lending programs organized under the Farm Credit Administration and the Farm Security Administration, she says, "Farmers have not been released from their subjection to nonfarm private capital."

In efforts to bring supply and market demand into alinement with each other, the New Deal has attacked the problem at the wrong end.

"Farmers oppose the hideous absurdity of limiting production when hungry people need more products from the land." In this often-reiterated criticism, no account is taken of the abundance at present available in the elevators and warehouses of the Nation. The AAA is criticized for the size of its early payments to corporation farms and large land-owners, and "Even the present \$10,000 maximum has allowed large-scale operations to receive benefits which might better have been distributed among the smallest farms." The program does not pretend to pay benefits in relation to the farmer's need.

"In spite of widespread compliance with the crop-restriction program, prices have failed to cover the farmers' average cost of production. With limited output, farmers' total income has remained far below precrisis levels."

About the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, it is complained that its program is concerned only with "surpluses" already produced and troublesome. "This distribution might be developed as a powerful instrument for relating production to the needs of the lowest-paid groups and the unemployed. But as it has functioned it is little more than a gesture."

Of the Fair Labor Standards Act in relation to these lowest-paid groups, the minimum wage rates have not assured workers "an adequate income" and relief has similarly allowed "only emergency diets and next to nothing for clothing and bedding and other supplies."

OF THE tenant purchase loans program, organized under the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act, the criticism is brought that "With three-quarters of a million sharecroppers and almost an equal number of other tenants on very small farms, this 'gesture' (17,000 farm purchase loans in the first 2 years after the act was passed) betrays a lack

of seriousness in dealing with the problem . . . The appropriation must be a hundred times larger" and "the poor tenants must be more democratically selected."

What to do? Must farmers continue to "suffer extreme poverty until the whole system is changed"?

Miss Rochester proposes a program of immediate action which in her view could, if it were "well organized and aggressive, bring some relief even under capitalism on the issue of markets and prices." (1) Limit the profits of big middlemen by much stricter regulation of monopoly traders and processors, and by setting up Federal, State, and municipal government grain elevators, public stockyards, cotton warehouses, creameries, and pasteurization plants as yardstick competitors to private concerns. (2) Nationalize the railroads, "with a minimum of compensation to the present owners." (3) Heavier Federal taxes on large salaries and capitalist incomes, and on the reserves of great corporations. (4) Apply this increased revenue to the purchasing and distribution of "excess" farm supplies to families on relief. (5) Substitute for crop restrictions broad constructive measures to increase employment and mass purchasing power—for example, a determined Nation-wide attack on the problem of housing. Such measures "must not be held back by capitalist pressure against competition with private industry." (6) "A sharp writing off of farmers' debts." (7) Working farmers unite with the wage-workers of the cities.

Eventually Miss Rochester's book is an invocation to struggle.

"These immediate goals can not be achieved lightly, for they challenge certain cardinal principles in our capitalist system. But farmers have never been afraid of struggle for purposes that clearly affect their interest \* \* \*. Only through an unshakable alliance between wage-workers and working farmers can the great productive forces of this country be released from the dead hand of finance capital. Only thus can the Government be made an instrument of the people. Only thus can it be compelled to place the need of those whom capitalism has driven to destitution above the demands and the intrigues of those who profit from exploitation."

Emphasis in this review has been on the basic philosophy of the book and on its proposals for reform in procedure. But attention should be directed, too, to the wealth of carefully organized and analyzed information on every phase of the agricultural situation included in the book. The data are drawn chiefly from the Census of Agriculture and from Department of Agriculture and other Government documents. Fact and interpretation are closely interwoven, but the composite constitutes a challenge of concern to all students of the agricultural situation.



# *For your attention*

STANDARDS OF VALUE FOR PROGRAM PLANNING AND BUILDING. 132 pp.  
*Bureau of Agricultural Economics. 1940.*

The proceedings of the School for the Washington Staff of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics are contained in this pamphlet. Included are reports of the lectures given by seven men on aspects of philosophy, sociology, economics, political science, history, anthropology, and education.

AN ECONOMIC STUDY OF LAND UTILIZATION IN YATES COUNTY, NEW YORK.  
*M. D. Woodin. 52 p. Bulletin 727. Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station. Ithaca. 1940.*

This bulletin describes how the land in Yates County—based on present land use, soils, size, and condition of farm buildings, topography and elevation, and market conditions—has been divided into nine classes. The main purposes of the classification, says Mr. Woodin, are to assist those who are interested in the land to put it to the uses for which it is best adapted and to form a basis for the development of services in rural areas.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING LAWS AFFECTING RURAL LAND USE ENACTED DURING 1939. *Kenneth Wernimont. 99 pp. Bulletin 51. Bureau of Agricultural Economics. 1940.*

This digest of outstanding legislation affecting rural land use enacted by the first session of the Seventy-sixth Congress and the regular and special sessions of State legislatures in 1939 was compiled primarily for the information of personnel of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Soil Conservation Service, and Forest Service.

FEDERAL RELATIONS TO LOCAL PLANNING. *Circular XIV. National Resources Planning Board. 364 pp. Processed. Washington, D. C. 1939.*

As a guide to the services and data available in the Federal Government for use in connection with local planning, the National Resources Planning Board has assembled statements concerning the general functions, activities affecting, and assistance to local planning, of 46 Federal agencies. Each statement begins with a brief description of the general functions of the Federal agency concerned. Then follows a more detailed account of those activities that are related to local government and planning.

CROPS AGAINST THE WIND ON THE SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS. *Glenn K. Rule. Farmers' Bulletin No. 1833. U. S. Department of Agriculture. 74 pp. 1939.*

This bulletin traces the circumstances that created the soil problems in the Southern Great Plains and shows how the hand of man has hastened present troubles. But it goes further and deals with the methods used to solve the problem on nature's own terms.

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